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Her parents were both persons of strong mind, sound sense, and superior culture for their position and times,—her father universally respected for his sturdy integrity and genuine manliness, her mother equally marked by the gentle virtues that adorned and blessed her household and her sphere of duty. A more charming picture of independence, modest refinement, hospitality, genial enjoyment, and mutual helpfulness than Miss Hunt has given us, we have seldom seen. As a subsidy for the slightly impaired fortune and declining energies of her father, our author in early womanhood opened a private school in one of the apartments of the family mansion. Her attention was first drawn to the science of medicine during a protracted illness of her only sister, which baffled the skill of the best medical advisers. Circumstances not of her own seeking led her by degrees to adopt the profession, of which she is now the chief representative of her sex in this city. All that she tells us of her modes of practice and her success as a practitioner impresses us with the conviction that she is doing good service in her calling; and while our strong preference is for the regular school in medicine, and quackery under whatever name seems to us an unmitigated evil and curse, we cannot but think that there is a portion of the physician's functions which may fittingly be delegated to women properly trained for the office. Miss Hunt has identified herself with various reform movements, and in these, if in a few details we might question her judgment, we admire her honesty and zeal, her kindly temper and gentle spirit. A Universalist by education and early belief, she is now a disciple of Swedenborg, and over a portion of her volume hangs something of the rich, mystic haze that wraps whatever appertains to the New Church. As a whole, the book has been to us both pleasant and suggestive; and while the earlier chapters of the author's autobiography will commend themselves to the delighted interest of every reader, we would bespeak for the later, and what she no doubt deems the more important portion, a candor like that which she seems ever ready to exercise.

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- 17.—1. *The Lances of Lynwood.* By the Author of "The Little Duke," "Heartsease," "Heir of Redclyffe," &c. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1856. 24mo. pp. 277.
2. *Rachel Gray: a Tale founded on Fact.* By JULIA KAVANAGH. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1856. 24mo. pp. 308.
3. *Lanmere.* By MRS. JULIA C. R. DORR. New York: Mason Brothers. 1856. 24mo. pp. 447.

WE select these from among the novels received since our last issue,

not because we know that they are the best, but because we have read them. With regard to all the rest, we are in the condition so happily free from prejudice, which, according to Sydney Smith, would qualify us to review them.

Had "The Lances of Lynwood" been the first of Miss Yonge's novels, it would have seemed to us a work of singular talent, skill, and promise. But it falls below the expectations which she herself has authorized. The reason probably is, that the glow of composition was somewhat chilled, and the free expression of sentiment checked, by the incessant endeavor to shun anachronisms. The plot is laid in the days, and to a considerable extent in the camp, of the Black Prince. The story, though bristling with arms, glorifies the gentler virtues that redeem, rather than the passions that govern, epochs of violence and scenes of carnage; and Eustace Lynwood, the chief personage, the most valiant knight in his prince's retinue, in all meek Christian graces, in the lesser amenities and charities of daily intercourse, and in what men, to their shame, are wont to designate as *womanly* tenderness, yields not even to Violet in Heartsease. Yet we cannot help feeling that the rude and stern exteriors of life in those unsettled times have constrained and cramped the writer's genius, as must his first suit of armor the limbs of the studious and clerkly youth, her hero.

"Rachel Gray" reminds us of Pleyel's Hymn, which produces the most exquisite melody by the simplest arrangement of a very few notes on the minor key. Rachel is an obscure, illiterate, unattractive needlewoman, dull of comprehension and awkward in speech, living in one of the dingy and decaying suburbs of London; and the story is the record of the struggles and trials of her uneventful life, and of like straitnesses and sorrows in the little circle around her, in which hers is the one queenly spirit, always firm, brave, and helpful, because her conscious feebleness is supplemented by the might of religious faith and the unfailing efficacy of prayer. From these slender materials is constructed a tale of engrossing interest, and, yet more, a series of graceful and unobtrusive lessons in the science of holy living. Is not the power of Christianity so to transfigure and glorify the lowliest personages and the paltriest incidents one of the most luscious tokens of its divinity? There must be greatness of station, circumstance, achievement, wisdom, or culture to constitute the hero or heroine of Pagan or non-religious fiction, while the Christian literary artist needs but to wave his wand over the very dust-heaps of humanity to turn the clods into diamonds.

"Lanmere" is a New England story, remarkable for the naturalness of its conversations and the verisimilitude of its female characters.

Its interest hangs mainly on the contrast between two sisters,—the elder unparalleled but by her mother in prudery and hypocrisy; the younger a creature of genial impulses, "a domesticated sunbeam," diffusing light and gladness everywhere except in her own home, and failing there only because the darkness is that which cannot be penetrated. Of living American novelists, we can hardly think of one who excels Mrs. Dorr in what is equally a desideratum in fiction and in history,—the capacity of managing a sufficient number of side-scenes, under-plots, and episodes to sustain dramatic interest, without violating dramatic unity.

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18.—*Mimic Life: or, Before and Behind the Curtain. A Series of Narratives.* By ANNA CORA RITCHIE (formerly Mrs. Mowatt). Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 12mo. pp. 408.

"THE Lights and Shadows of the Stage" would have been a not inappropriate *alias* for this title. Mrs. Ritchie vindicates the capacity of her late profession, not only to preserve uncontaminated, but to nurture and cherish, glorious types of moral beauty no less than of genius; and at the same time lets us into the source and process of the debasing and corrupting influences to which many of its members have yielded. The stories are all tragedies, unless we except the last, in which the heroine is made happy by the suicide of her accepted, but unloved lover, who adopts this ultra-heroic mode of abdicating in favor of his successful rival. The interest of each of the tales is even painfully intense; and they are all characterized by pure and lofty sentiment, and wrought out in a style of exquisite grace and beauty.

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19.—*Illustrations of Scripture; suggested by a Tour through the Holy Land.* By HORATIO B. HACKETT, Professor in the Newton Theological Seminary. Boston: Heath and Graves. 12mo. pp. 340.

PROFESSOR HACKETT, instead of following the beaten track of authorship, and publishing a journal of his Eastern tour, has thrown into a series of chapters such of his observations as promised aid in verifying the authenticity and expounding the text of Scripture. Each of his chapters contains a distinct department of illustration; one being devoted to modes of travelling, another to agriculture, and so on. We were previously aware of his critical acumen; he here shows himself